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These feuds did not affect only the relations between local lords; intense strifes and vendettas were flourishing within the family of each one of the princes. Struggle for power and expansion often caused fratricidal warfare among the brothers after the death of their father. The old chronicles and other historical documents are full of examples of such family feuds. Murder, torture and blinding among the brothers and even between fathers and sons apparently were frequent.[20] The life of each one of these local potentates was spent in perpetual warfare, in feuding, and in plundering adventures.[21]

Power-thirstiness, factionalism, and rule of crude force prevailed among these petty rulers in no lesser way than among their nomadic predecessors and overlords. The internal system of rule on the domains of each prince was not more advanced. As the Russian written laws of that period testify, the killing of prince's representatives on the part of the peasants must have been frequent. City populace often rose in riots and revolutionary outbursts against the oppressive conditions imposed by these lords.[22] It was such conditions of physical, social and emotional insecurity that favored perpetuation of the institutions, practices, and other behavior traits which were introduced by the nomadic invaders and conquerors.

III

The changes that in the course of several centuries were taking place in social and psychological structure of the Old-Slavonic world as a result of the imposition of the rule of the nomadic warriors seem to have been well reflected in the Great-Russian folklore, especially in its epic legends. The military, the peasants, the burghers, their conflicts and their character traits are personified in these narratives by a number of popular heroes.[23]

The general picture which these folk documents present shows that the social stability which existed in the Old-Slavonic society was completely shattered as a result of nomadic invasions and conquests. The invading warriors not only caused great havoc but they provoked rapid and fundamental changes in the structure of the old society. Moreover the social disorganization and the political and economic instability that resulted out of these

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where true Christianity was preserved. In the official statements. in the prayers, in the Church sermons and school textbooks, the Russian Empire was represented as a Holy Land (*Sviataya Rus*).

Accordingly, official geographic studies and statistics tended to magnify everything within the frontiers of the Empire. Russian possessions and might, the resources and riches of the Czar, the progress and virtues of the country were pictured in the school textbooks in a fabulous way. A steady and imposing territorial growth of the Czardom in the course of many centuries at the expense of the East and the West undoubtedly supported these feelings of greatness. In this manner successes in policies of external expansion promoted desires for further conquests.

As long as the authority of the Church remained unshaken the power of the Czar rested on solid foundations. The Czars were able to increasingly concentrate and monopolize all social power while the Czardom expanded territorially in all directions, in spite of all its internal weaknesses.

In the meantime, however, the economic, educational and religious reforms introduced since the eighteenth century tended to undermine the sacredness of the Church as well as the power of the Czar. It was in such circumstances that feelings of revolt bred on all levels of social organization had an opportunity to come into the open, challenging the Czarist regime and all the institutions on which it was based. The people who were treated like wards and minors and were kept in oppressive dependency in the family, in the local community and on the state level rebelled against the system which kept them in perpetual bondage, a trend of events which finally brought about the downfall of the Czardom. The family roots and the development of this personal and social revolt which had shattered the Czardom will be discussed on the following pages.

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women as stupid and nasty, conceited and licentious, and as the mainspring of all calamities of the world.[10] But Tolstoy, too, like the Russian popular view of life, did make a distinction between the woman and the mother.[11]

Hostile drives, mistrust and destructive aggression might be revealed also in attitudes towards strangers. These are sometimes likened to animals, especially dogs. Comparing people with beasts indicates an inclination to abase them and to mistreat them. Such an attitude is shown especially toward those who are considered to be "enemies." When talking about the Tartars, the people would say "the dog of a Tartar." In a like way, xenophobia was manifested in the attitudes toward the "thrice accursed Latins," that is, the Western, non-Orthodox peoples.

Perhaps this need to abuse and to destroy in order to demonstrate one's power was manifested also in treatment of those who were abandoned and helpless, such as prisoners in foreign wars, as well as prisoners in rebellions and civil wars at home, or convicted criminals. In the rebellions and civil wars atrocities were committed by both sides, the government troops and the rebels, the Orthodox and the Dissenters, the Whites and the Reds. In a similar manner convicted criminals, domestic servants and serfs were often used as targets of destructive aggression.

Tendency to abuse was manifested also in the relations between merchants and customers, capital and labor. In the lowest strata ruthless self-seeking took also the form of begging. There was a great number of beggars; begging became a widely spread business. Some of the beggars became people of considerable means. Leaders among the beggars would mutilate, deprive of eyesight, and deform healthy men and boys to use them as their instruments in begging. Entire villages, and even some regions were said to have made begging their regular profession.[12]

II

In circumstances where power-seeking, destructive aggression and mistrust prevail any accident may be interpreted as a sign of another person's hostile intentions. The other person tends to be looked upon as a potential enemy. "You mustn't stroke anyone's head—you might get your hand bitten off," said Lenin.[13] And as

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former role as main instruments of the Czar's power to a parvenu bureaucracy and military that leaders of first opposition movements were recruited.

Even before and during the French Revolution a number of Russian landed nobility became aware of the ideas of the Revolution. They were also becoming increasingly interested in constitutional forms of government in which they could take part in their own right, not depending upon the whims of a despotic monarch. Some of these people even became dissatisfied with serfdom because of its economic inefficiency. They were also becoming increasingly impatient with absolutism because of its oppressive and degrading aspects.

Such ideas and feelings penetrated the officers' corps and a number of this military intelligentsia organized themselves into a secret society and formulated a concrete program for constitutional changes.[1] Some of these people came from high nobility. Others, especially those from the South, were impoverished nobles living on meager officer's salaries. In December, 1825 these people attempted to seize power. However, owing to ideological differences and the traditional factional splits within the dvorianstvo, the attempt of this faction of military intelligentsia to gain power was thwarted.[2] Nevertheless, this uprising of the "Decembrists," though abortive, was the beginning of increasing revolutionary activities of the intelligentsia[3] which finally brought about the overthrow of the Czardom in the Revolution of 1917.

The revolt of the Decembrists was a sign that the Czardom had already gone through such changes in its social structure that a change in its political system was overdue. The most important change in this structure was the formation of a class which, for the first time in Russia's history, became economically independent of the Czar, and which, though economically idle and not always prosperous, became intellectually very alert and also very sensitive to Western ideas.

In accordance with the traditional behavior pattern of Russian nobility, their reactions to the conditions at home and to Western thought tended to develop in the direction of two opposite extremes. One was that of the "Westerners" who were

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19
PEASANT UPRISINGS

I

EVER since the establishment of serfdom, slaves and serfs would free themselves from oppressive bondage by joining the gangs of vagabonds, fugitives from justice, army deserters, malcontents and escapees of all kinds, many of whom lived by theft, robbery, and begging. These victims of oppression, as well as many adventurers, gathered along the frontiers of the empire in "no man's land" where they would organize themselves as bands of freebooters, guerillas, and mercenaries, ready to enter the service of rival powers.

In the regions of the lower Don and Dnieper these communities of fugitives of all social classes and occupations and of many races formed elective military governments, known as the Cossack republics. Once they were established, these free Cossack communes served as a place of attraction to all who longed for freedom from oppression or who sought adventure. In these free societies no one was asked any question about his passport, his identity, his domicile, his faith, or his belongings. Everyone willing to fight and loot was welcome, but none was forced to come or stay.[1]

However, by the middle of the seventeenth century in these Cossack commonwealths, there appeared a social differentiation between the old settlers and the newcomers. The older settlers formed a property-owning class known as the "house-owners," and the newcomers became known as the *golytba* (the naked). And it was these unsettled and restless Cossacks of the "naked class" that played an especially prominent part in the uprisings of the seventeenth century and later.[2]

The first part of the seventeenth century, known in the history of the Czardom as the "Period of Trouble," was characterized by the lack of an established authority. The old dynasty had

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ended in a violent and mysterious way and a number of pretenders arose to take its place. It was in this interval between the fall of the former authority and the relative consolidation of a new one that the oppressed strata of the Czardom saw an opportunity to rebel against a state of humiliating bondage and economic misery. Seeking relief from their burdens and yearning for social acceptance in a system of equalitarian relationships, the poorer burghers, homeless Cossacks and runaway peasants and slaves flocked into the camp of Bolotnikov, himself an ex-slave and adventurer who marched at the head of this strange army upon Moscow. From his camp near Moscow he distributed proclamations inviting slaves and serfs to slay their masters, commanding all of his followers to rise against the voevodas and others in authority, and exciting them to rob and beat traders. In return he promised the slaves and serfs the wives and the property of the serf-owners. To all his followers he pledged honors, riches and the status of boyars.[8]

Search for security in a system of protection-dependence relationships manifested itself in a need for pretenders. If only a rumor started about the appearance of a pretender, whole provinces would rise to greet him. Sometimes a pretender had to be subsequently found to lead these masses of discontents who rose to follow a fancied liberator and benefactor. Such conditions only contributed to the prolongation of the troubled times and prevented an early establishment and consolidation of a new authority. It was in such a way that most of the seventeenth century became a century of riotings and rebellions which climaxed in the great rising under Stanka Razin in 1670–1671. Originating among the Don Cossacks, this movement soon spread to the Volga regions and developed into a general war of the lower strata against the upper classes. In this, as in the other uprisings of that century, many excesses were committed by both the rebels and the government forces. The same features of social struggle were repeated in the eighteenth century, in the great peasant rebellion that was led by Pugachev, another Cossack chieftain.

Also the nineteenth century witnessed a number of peasant rebellions. In the beginning of that century the peasants of the

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Pensa gubernia rose against the landlords with the slogan "Liberty and Land" (*Zemlya i Volya*).[4] Ever since they had been enserfed and bound to the land, the peasants kept in cherished memory the *Yuriev den*, St. George's day, the day when in earlier times each peasant was allowed to leave his landlord (*vykhod*). The peasants' demand for freedom from bondage was as strong as their demand for land. When the ideas of personal, economic and political freedoms started to penetrate Russia from the European West, also, the Russian peasants, owing to a growing contact with the city and the intelligentsia, became affected by them and in consequence revolts were increasing in number. Between 1826 and 1830 there were 41 cases of peasant rebellions and between 1858–1860 there were 284 such uprisings.[5]

It is significant to note that these peasant rebellions became especially prominent and especially widely spread each time the ruling class had suffered loss of prestige, such as in case of defeat on the battlefield. During the Crimean War in 1854 and 1855 widespread peasant uprisings took place on the shores of the Volga, and in central and southwestern gubernias, the Vladimir, Ryasan, Tambov, Pensa, and Voronezh.[6] In these provinces the mir institution prevailed and periodical redistribution of land was practiced. Here also reaction against abusive and humiliating conditions of serfdom was very intense and demand for land became very strong. In these provinces the traditions of earlier revolts were fresh in the memory of the peasantry. In addition, growing density of population and increasing land shortage tended to strengthen the revolutionary attitudes of the peasants. Their hostilities turned against the landlords whom they blamed for all their ills and misfortunes.

II

The defeat in the Crimean War and the internal disturbances which followed that war forced the Czarist government to undertake measures to reorganize its armed forces and to stabilize the regime internally. After being defeated by technologically and politically superior enemies, the Czarist government finally realized that in order to improve Russia's fighting effectiveness vis-a-vis the West, higher state revenues were needed and these

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the peasantry, and appealed to their deeply rooted hostilities against the ruling classes, and against all people of means. In their proclamations to the peasantry they stated that "the land belongs to those who till it." They incited the peasants to appropriate by force hay, pasture, and timber. They also encouraged violence and murder against all those whom they held responsible for their plight.[9]

As a result of such propaganda and agitation combined with economic and social difficulties, peasant disturbances were renewed and increased in frequency and intensity. They led to the events of 1905. That year the government suffered a considerable loss of prestige because of the defeat on the battlefield (the Japanese War of 1904–1905). In such circumstances (the same as after the Crimean War), fear and awe and unconditional obedience—the foundations of Czarist rule—were shaken, internal disturbances ensued and threatened the existence of the Czardom. By this time the revolutionary eruptions of the peasantry were combined with those of the industrial proletariat. Between January and April, 1905, there were about 660,000 workers on economic and political strikes.[10] In October of the same year there was again a general strike.

In that month also a general peasant rising took place embracing three hundred districts in 47 gubernias. Again it was the central and southern regions that took the lead;[11] and again the gubernias in which the landlords suffered the heaviest losses were predominantly those where the system of repartitional land tenure prevailed over the system of individual peasant households and of hereditary holdings. In the communities with communal land holdings the dissatisfaction was greatest and violence ran especially high.

The activities of the Social Revolutionaries in the village were joined by those of the Bolsheviks. By the beginning of the twentieth century a wing of the Russian Social Democratic Party, the Bolsheviks, who earlier scorned the peasants and worked exclusively among the urban proletariat, began to pay more attention to the Russian village. They became impressed by the frequency and the intensity of the peasants' disturbances and realized that the peasantry presented potentially very ex-

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and unemployment, a situation that was well exploited by the professional conspirators, particularly the Bolsheviks.

By the end of the nineteenth century the first wave of strikes swept the country.[2] At first the strikes were spontaneous, local and purely economic in character. The workers wanted higher wages and better working conditions. But since many industries were located in Petersburgh which was the center of heavy industry, and in Moscow which was the center of the railroad system and of the textile industry, the revolutionary intelligentsia and professional conspirators and agitators who were also concentrated in these two capitals could not fail to see great political opportunities, both in the concentration of the industrial proletariat, and in its economic plight. But there were differences among the revolutionary factions of the intelligentsia in regard to revolutionary propaganda and agitation.

The ideological differences as to propaganda policies and revolutionary strategy was one of the factors which led to the split of the Socialist Democratic Party into two factions, the *Bolsheviks* (the majority), and the *Mensheviks* (the minority). Being mostly of urban middle class origin the Mensheviks were inclined to advocate gradual advance of the country toward democratization. They also proposed an alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie. Accordingly also in internal Party organization the Mensheviks were in favor of a policy of liberalism and democracy. The Bolshevik faction, on the other hand, was recruited from among the raznochintsy who were affected by Anarchism and were inclined toward extremist solutions and recognized no compromise. They proposed an alliance with the revolutionary peasants and an armed rebellion staged by the workers and peasants as the most effective means of seizing power.

Following the ideas and practices of the Anarchists and the Terrorists (Narodovoltsy), the Bolsheviks claimed that the immediate seizure of power was of paramount importance while the work of educating the masses could begin later. That end, the seizure of power, to the Bolsheviks no less than to their political predecessors, the Anarchists, sanctified everything. Deliberate instigation of hatred, planned deceit, individual killing, armed uprising, and systematic terror were all equally approved

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means if they led to the final goal, revolution and the overthrow of the Czarist system. Thus even at that time the Party was placed above everything else and the interests and the rights of the individual had to be subordinated to the Party and to its supreme objective, the revolution. At the second congress of Russian Social Democrats, which took place in London in 1903 where the final split between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks occurred, Pasadovski, one of Lenin's aassiciates declared:

> There is no doubt that we do not agree on the following fundamental issue: should our future policy be subordinated to some kind of basic democratic principles, or should all democratic principles be subordinated exclusively to the advantages of our party. I decidedly advocate the latter. There is nothing among the democratic principles that we should not subordinate to the advantages of our Party. . . . Yes, also the inviolability of the individual. As a revolutionary party striving for its ultimate aim—social revolution, we should consider the democratic principles exclusively from the standpoint of the advantages of our party.[3]

This idea of supreme Party interests to which everybody and everything was subordinated was closely associated with the principle of centralistic and dictatorial party organization which was earlier conceived by Bakunin and later advocated by Lenin, and finally adopted by the Communist International.[4] Lenin said that the organizational principle of revolutionary social democracy demands the enlargement of the rights and plenary powers of the central body against the parts.[5] Just like Bakunin, Lenin advocated the need of a "close circle of professional revolutionaries"[6] who would compose a stable and continuous Party leadership. He claimed that in a country with despotic leadership, in a life and death struggle with Czarist police, a small but stable and continuous revolutionary committee at the top of the Party would be more efficient to lead a mass movement and therefore better equipped to seize power.[7]

This principle of centralized and autocratic Party leadership which had its roots in the self-seeking drives of the raznochintsy led eventually to the dictatorship of one man. Just as Bakunin saw only himself at the top of his revolutionary hierarchy, so did Lenin. Early in the history of the Party it was noticed that

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565 517 icism of its rank and file, that gave this Party an advantage over its main rival for power, the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries, in the chaotic days of 1917.

727 669 565 Just as it had happened in the past, a weakening of the prestige of the ruling classes as a result of defeats on the battlefield led to peasant uprisings. Almost immediately after the Czar's abdication, that is, in March, 1917, peasant rebellions arose in 34 districts and by June spread to 325 districts. The distrubances were again especially intensive in the upper Don and in the middle Volga, the regions where the tradition of revolt was strong and the situation for revolt matured owing to unsatisfactory conditions within the land communes.

665 669 The chaos that ensued in the village was emphasized by factional strife and indecision in the center. As a result of the fall of the old Czarist regime, the two most extreme revolutionary parties, the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks, entered into a contest for power. While the Socialist Revolutionaries controlled the Provisional Government (since May, 1917), the Bolsheviks did everything to undermine their regime and to seize the power for themselves. In the question of rural policies, the government of Socialist Revolutionaries attempted to stop the outbreaks of lawlessness and disorder in the villages by promising an equitable solution of all rural problems on the basis of laws that were to be passed by a Constitutional Assembly.

[425] [565] But the Bolsheviks counteracted such policies by inciting the peasants to seize the lands at once. The Bolsheviks also deliberately sharpened the existing social cleavages in the villages by inciting the lower peasant strata against the upper. The Bolshevised soldiers, on leave or deserting the front, pushed more moderate elements into the background and led the peasant mobs not only against the landlords, but also against the more prosperous peasant classes. Hence, attacks on *Khutoryane* (hereditary peasant homestead owners) and *otrubniki* (peasant individual property owners) were as frequent as those against the manorial estates.

Many soldiers deserted the front because the Bolshevik agitators told them that the land was being distributed back home and that those who were present would get the choice grounds. The government, controlled by the Socialist Revolutionaries,

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appeared to be unable to solve these revolutionary outbursts, perhaps because the seeds of these revolts of the peasant masses had been sown by the revolutionary and terroristic propaganda of this same Party now in power. Moreover, this Party, though in power, was split into four factions which bitterly fought one another. Some of these factions allied themselves with the Bolsheviks to strengthen themselves in their internal Party fight. The ranks of the Bolsheviks therefore grew steadily from all sides. They had clearly defined aims and were well organized under the undisputed leadership of one man, whose unchallenged authority all Bolsheviks recognized. Their aim was to seize power at any cost and by any and all means.

In the face of an internally split and undecisive government which lacked authority, and in the midst of general chaotic conditions, the power of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the revolutionary bodies which were established throughout the country, steadily grew. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in Petrograd was increasingly competing with the government for the control of the state. Because of their extremism, the influence of the Bolsheviks in these powerful revolutionary bodies soon became dominant. Thus, supported by bolshevised soldiers and proletariat and promising to bring peace, bread and equalitarian brotherhood to all, the Bolsheviks were enabled to seize power.[15]

In the civil war that followed between the Bolsheviks and anti-Bolsheviks, the dissatisfied military ranks, the lower urban classes, the national and religious minorities, and a large part of the peasantry took the side of the Bolsheviks, who promised an anarchic and egalitarian Utopia for each and everyone, just as many religious sects, leaders of peasant uprisings, Anarchists and Terrorists have done before them. All those who yearned for equality and acceptance at all levels of Russian society either actively helped the Bolsheviks against the White armies, or, fearing the return of the old regime, were unwilling to fight with the Whites against Reds. The attitudes of these people, combined with the ruthlessness and resoluteness of Bolshevik political and military leadership, were decisive factors in this final victory of Bolshevism.[16]

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to force the peasants to join the collectives and the state farms. Those who opposed such policies were resettled or banished to convict labor camps. Many were massacred. According to Stalin ten million peasants became victims of this "class war."[5]

In order to insure their complete control over the farming population, the Bolshevik leaders sent the most trusted Party people from the city to the village to manage the newly formed *kolhozes*. These *novye bary* (new lords), as the peasants called them, installed themselves in the mansions of former estate owners and kept themselves at a considerable distance from the rural population, not unlike the former serf-owners. And not unlike the former gentry the new masters were also bent upon extracting maximum labor from the peasantry with minimum reward.

Under such conditions, the peasants, in the first outbursts of their reaction against this state of abusive submission resorted to outward aggression in the form of traditional uprisings. They burnt their crops and slaughtered their cattle rather than collectivize them. It is estimated that almost two-thirds of the entire livestock and a large part of the crops were destroyed.[6] Such a situation affected even the Ukraine, the "granary of Russia" and greatly contributed to the famine of 1932–33 in which hundreds of thousands of people died of starvation and epidemics. It was by such active rebellion that the peasantry forced the Party into a temporary retreat. The Party had to appease the peasants by giving each peasant household the right to retain in private use a small plot of land, and also in private possession a limited number of livestock. Also, private trade in agricultural products was restored in a limited degree.[7]

These were however only temporary concessions, since the Bolsheviks were determined to completely "industrialize" the peasantry as a means of political and economic control. Following such aims the highest possible degree of specialization in farm operation has been fostered and the members of the same family have been assigned to different, spacially separated activities. In this manner the agricultural brigade instead of the peasant family became the basic unit of agricultural production. For the same reason the highest possible degree of mechanization of